

Applicant : Ronald P. Knockeart et al.
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012001 / 2000P07793US01/7808

REMARKS

The applicant has amended the specification and claims 1, 3, and 10, and added new claims 19 to 27.

Below, the applicant's comments are preceded by related remarks of the examiner set forth in small bold type.

Claims 1, 2, 4 to 7, 11, 12, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by *French-St. George et al.* ('030).

Regarding independent claim 1, *French-St. George et al.* ('030) discloses a method for management of speech and audio prompts in multimodal interfaces, comprising:

...

Claims 13 to 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *French-St. George et al.* ('030) in view of *Kamei et al.*

***French-St. George et al.* ('030) discloses a method of sorting through inputs when valid tokens are returned for more than one mode, i.e., touch input, pen input, and speech input. Specifically, *French-St. George et al.* ('030) generally prefers touch input over speech input when both are received, so spoken input is rejected, unless the speech recognizer is on. (Figure 7) Arguably, "the environment" can be read to include what sorts of input are received in the context of whether the speech recognizer is in the foreground or in the background. However, *French-St. George et al.* '030) does not disclose or suggest an environment including a motor vehicle, wherein the speed of the vehicle is monitored, and manual input is rejected when the speed of the vehicle exceeds a threshold speed. However, *Kamei et al.*, teaches an automatic dial telephone usable in a motor vehicle by speech recognition, where a safety confirmation procedure determines whether or not a speed detected by a speed detector is smaller than a predetermined reference speed, (Column 8, Line 51 to column 9, Line 7; Figure 4: Step 43). The safety confirmation procedure is employed in a variety of contexts, so that automatic dialing is performed only under safe driving conditions. (Column I, Lines 61 to 64). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to inhibit manual or spoken input in a motor vehicle in an environment where the speed of the vehicle exceeds a threshold speed as suggested by *Kamei et al.* in the multi-modal Interface of *French-St. George et al.* ('030) for the purpose of performing automatic dialing only under safe driving conditions.**

The applicant has amended claim 1 to include limitations similar to those in the original claim 13. *French-St. George* does not disclose or suggest, and would not have made obvious,

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"[a] method for controlling a device in an environment using mixed manual and spoken input comprising ... monitoring an external condition in the environment of the device; and ... limiting an input mode according to the external condition in the environment," as recited in amended claim 1.

The Examiner appears to contend that French-St. George discloses rejecting speech input when touch input is provided, and such rejection is according to an environment. The applicant disagrees with the Examiner's rejections for at least two independent reasons, either of which is sufficient to overcome the Examiner's rejections.

First, French-St. George does not disclose or suggest, and would not have made obvious, "limiting an input mode" according to the external condition in the environment. French-St. George does not reject spoken input when a touch input is received. Rather, when inputs are received for more than one mode, "the system provides a subsequent screen prompt for input, and captures input by the appropriate mode, depending on whether the recognition window of the speech recognizer is open or closed, and whether the speech interface is in background state or foreground state." (col. 9, line 66 to col. 10, line 4). As shown in FIG. 7 of French-St. George, "inputs for each mode are captured, and as the flow chart shows identifiers for written, spoken and touch input are generated, the input is processed and tokens representing a match for each input are processed by a sequence of steps," (col. 9, lines 31-35). Regardless of whether the speech interface is in a foreground state or a background state, speech input is allowed. Thus, what French-St. George teaches is adjusting the operating state of the system in response to a particular mode of input from the user, not "limiting an input mode" according to the external condition in the environment.

Second, even if French-St. George taught limiting an input mode, such limiting is not "according to the external condition in the environment." The applicant does not agree with the Examiner's definition of "the environment of a device" to include whether the device has a speech interface in the foreground or background. The applicant has used "environment"

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according to its plain meaning, such as according to the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th Edition, "the circumstances, objects, or conditions by which one is surrounded." In French-St. George, whether the speech recognizer is open or closed, and whether the speech interface is in the background state or foreground state, merely represent different operating states of the system, and are not an environment of the system according to this plain meaning.

Further, even if the word "environment" is broadly construed to cover operating states of a system, claim 1 has been amended to recite "limiting an input mode according to the external condition in the environment." Whether the speech recognizer is open or closed, and whether the speech interface is in the background state or foreground state, are not "external condition[s] in the environment."

It is unclear what features of Kamei are used by the Examiner in the rejection of original claim 13. What is lacking in French-St. George is also not disclosed or suggested by Kamei. Kamei discloses a safety confirmation procedure for an automatic dial telephone that is usable in a motor vehicle. The safety confirmation procedure determines whether the angle of rotation of a steering wheel is smaller than a predetermined reference angle, whether the brake is off, and whether the speed of the car is smaller than a predetermined reference speed. (col. 8, lines 51-64). The safety confirmation procedure continues to monitor the rotation angle, brake condition, and car speed until the safety conditions are met, upon which "[t]he program proceeds to the step 6, 11, or 24 of FIGS. 3A and 3B for voice output." (col. 8, lines 64-65) Step 6 relates to outputting a voice guidance from the loudspeaker urging the user to input the name of a called party (col. 6, lines 42-55). Step 11 relates to outputting the name of the n-th candidate from the loudspeaker (col. 7, lines 1-10). Step 24 relates to outputting a voice guidance asking the user whether to output the names of the called parties again (col. 8, lines 14-20).

Thus, what Kamei teaches is a safety procedure that prevents output of voice prompts when safety conditions are not met. Kanei does not disclose or suggest "limiting an input mode according to the external condition in the environment," as required by amended claim 1. Limiting an input mode includes, for example, "rejecting manual input" (claim 14), "rejecting

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spoken input" (claim 15), "rejecting manual input when the speed of the vehicle exceeds a threshold speed" (claim 17), and "rejecting a first category of manual inputs but allowing a second category of manual inputs" (claim 19).

Independent claim 18 is patentable for at least similar reasons as claim 1. The dependent claims, including newly added claims 19-21, are patentable for at least the same reasons as the claims on which they depend.

Claim 13 has been cancelled without prejudice. The applicant reserves the right to pursue this claim in a continuation application.

Any circumstance in which the applicant has addressed certain comments of the examiner does not mean that the applicant concedes other comments of the examiner. Any circumstance in which the applicant has made arguments for the patentability of some claims does not mean that there are not other good reasons for patentability of those claims and other claims. Any circumstance in which the applicant has amended a claim does not mean that the applicant concedes any of the examiner's positions with respect to that claim or other claims.

Please apply \$500 for excess claim fees and \$1,020 for the Petition for Extension of Time fee, and any other charges to deposit account 06-1050, referencing attorney docket 09650-012001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 2/24/2005

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* See attached document certifying that Rex Huang has limited recognition to practice before the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office under 37 CFR § 10.9(b).

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